

THE
Spectre Bridegroom;

OR, A

GHOST IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

A FARCE.

IN TWO ACTS.

Founded on a story of the same name,
in the Sketch Book.

BY W. T. MONCRIEFF, ESQ.
Author of Giovanni in London, &c. &c. &c.

What? hath this thing appeared again?
SHAKESPEARE.

[As performed at the New-York Theatre,]



NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY E. MURDEN,
CIRCULATING LIBRARY AND DRAMATIC REPOSITORY,
No. 4 Chamber-street.

Dec. 1821.

PR
5028
1868
107
2

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ,



New-York Theatre.

Mr Nicodemus, - - -	Mr. Woodhull.
Squire Aldwinkle, - -	Mr. Reed.
Captain Vauntington, -	Mr. Phillips.
Dickory, - - - -	Mr. Barnes.
Paul, - - - -	Mr. Bancker.
Servants, - - - -	Messrs. Went, &c.
Miss Georgiana Aldwinkle.	Miss Jones.
Lavinia, (her Cousin,) -	Miss Johnson.

ALEX. MING, JUN. PRINTER,
No. 84 Front-street.

EVERY
DUST

THE
SPECTRE BRIDEGROOM.

&c. &c.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*An apartment in Mr. Nicodemus's House.*

Enter Nicodemus and Servant.

Nic. My cousin's servant, Paul, enquiring for me! what can he possibly want with me? Let him come in. *[Exit Servant.*

It must certainly be some business of life and death to make my gay thoughtless cousin send to me, for though every one allows we are as like as two peas in person, no one has ever discovered the slightest similarity in our minds, he has none of my solidity, none of my depth and gravity,—he's all volatility, wild, uncertain,—Hey, oh! here Paul comes. Well, Paul, what brings you here?

Enter Paul.

Paul. (*crying*) Oh, sir, such a relation! your poor cousin——

Nic. Poor cousin; why he has'nt surely gambled away all his estates on a cast of the die?

Paul. Worse than that, sir, though to be sure it is through the die he has lost every thing. Ah, sir, when I look at you, it renews all my grief, poor gentleman, I fancy I see him still—oh, oh! (*crying.*)

Nic. What mean you, explain, good Paul, what horrible event are you going to relate?

Paul. My poor master, sir—unfortunate gentleman, he was just going to sow all his wild oats in a marriage with the young and beautiful Miss Aldwinkle, daughter of the rich Squire Aldwinkle, of Aldwinkle Hall—oh! oh! oh!

Nic. Well, what was there so very shocking in that?

Paul. You shall hear, sir; they had never seen one another, but my master had sent his portrait, which was approved of both by the young lady and her father.

Nic. No doubt, if he remained as like me as he used to be.

Paul. Very true, sir; it was settled that my master was to go to Aldwinkle Hall this very evening, that the ceremony might take place out of hand.

Nic. Well, and why didn't he go——

Paul. He did go, sir, but going and coming are two different things; and it will be long enough before they find him come to Aldwinkle Hall—oh! oh!

Nic. Why?

Paul. A slight impediment, sir—We set out the first thing this morning on our way there, but had scarcely performed a third part of the journey, when my poor master fell down in an apoplectic fit!—oh! oh!

Nic. Unhappy Gaspar! but what could he expect, living as he did.

Paul. He expected to be married, sir, and repent, but the Fates ordered it otherwise. Atropos came with her damned shears and cut his vital thread, as close as any taylor in the king-

dom could have done. Just before he gave his last kick, he called me to him, and squeezing my hand, exclaimed, "Paul, my dear Paul, as soon as its all over, send my body to the half-way-house, where dinner will be waiting for me; then hasten to my cousin, Abraham, (that's you, sir) bid him set off immediately to Aldwinkle Hall, break out the melancholy news to the Old Squire and my dear Georgiana, return, bury me decently, write an epitaph to my memory, take all I'm worth for his pains, and I shall rest in peace!—oh, oh!

Nic. Poor fellow, did he die rich?

Paul. Pretty well for that, sir.

Nic. Then his wishes shall be complied with. I'll lock up my grand treatise on Vampires, hasten to Aldwinkle Hall this very moment, and return here the first thing to-morrow morning, to make preparations for the funeral. Unhappy Gaspar! he was the last of the Nicodemus family, except myself. What a pity he was'nt as like me in other things as he was in person. But, drink! drink was the ruin of him. I'll go directly and break out the melancholy news to Miss and the Old gentleman, while you, Paul, you——

Paul. I'll go to the half-way-house and watch over my poor master's remains. Poor gentleman, drink was, as you say, sir, the ruin of him. Heigho, sorrow is dry, I must get a little drop of something to comfort me for his loss—Good bye, sir, oh, oh!

Nic. Farewell, Paul. Heu Fugaces! what frail creatures we are. [*Exeunt ambo.*

SCENE II. *An apartment in Aldwinkle Hall.**Enter Georgiana and Lavinia.*

Lav. If you ask my advice, my dear Georgiana, I must candidly express my opinion, that as you wish to marry Captain Vauntington, who has no money, and Mr. Nicodemus, who has plenty, wishes to marry you; you, having plenty, ought to take pity on the Captain's poverty, and leave me, who have nothing, to make love if I like, to Mr. Nicodemus's abundance. Its quite enough for one party to be rich in marriage, there can be no participation if its otherwise, you know.

Geo. What you say, coz. is, as it always is, full of excellent sense; the only question is, how is it to be accomplished. You know my father's obstinacy; his engagement with Mr. Nicodemus, and—Eh, here comes my father, and my dear captain too as I live; they are discussing a subject too interesting to my feelings to permit my being an auditor. Let us retire my dear cousin, and await in hope the end of their conference. [*Exeunt Georgiana and Lavinia.*]

Enter Aldwinkle and Vauntington.

Ald. Tis no use talking Mr. Vauntington—if you are a captain, you are only a South American captain; they spring up like mushrooms, now o days, and egad, are worth about as much.

Vaunt. But my dear sir, my family——

Ald. Ah, there's the thing—if you get a family, how the devil are you to support them; besides, I've solemnly engaged my daughter to Mr. Nicodemus, he has it under my hand and

seal—sent it him by the General Post above a month ago To be sure, I've never seen the gentleman, but his character is undeniable.

Vaunt. It is not too late to retract sir!

Ald. Indeed, but it is, sir, for I expect him to arrive every moment. He sent me word he was coming express, though there was no occasion for that; I knew it; for independently of an amazingly bright letter in the candle last night, that pointed directly towards me. my man Dickory, saw a stranger on the bars this morning; that immediately he clapp'd his hands, flew into the fire—a sure sign he was a good friend; besides that, my daughter found one in her tea cup, at breakfast time---an astonishingly hard bite.

Vaunt. Ridiculous childish superstition!

Ald. So you may think; but I'm of a different opinion. You're one of those heedless fellows now, who'd walk twenty times under a ladder and never once look behind you, and if you were to see fifty piebald horses, would'nt pull a hair out of the tail of any one of them, though you might get any thing you chose to wish for, for your pains.

Vaunt. But allow me to say sir, that my passion for your daughter——

Ald. Zounds, sir, you'll put me in a passion, if you go on in this way, hav'nt I sent Dickory off to meet Mr. Nicodemus, at the half-way-house, where he wrote me word, he should stop and dine, on purpose to conduct him here all the sooner. I wonder they hav'nt arrived, for its getting rather late.

Vaunt. But early impressions, first love, sir——

Ald. Second thoughts are best—hey, surely I hear the sound of visitors without. It must be

Mr. Nicodemus. Now do, my good sir, oblige me by taking an answer and going. Mr. Nicodemus has put your nose so completely out of joint that——

Vaunt. Vulgar rascal, but your former kindness——

Ald. Now do go.

Vaunt. My high expectations——

Ald. Lower your tone, my good friend, I beg, zounds do you think you're giving the word of command; Its time I turn General, come, march!

Vaunt. I must submit to fate, you'll repent this old Aldwinkle; take my word for it; the loss is as much yours as mine, so good night. Poor Georgiana! [Exit Vauntington.

Ald. Thank heaven he's off—now then for——

Enter Servant preceding Nicodemus.

Serv. Mr. Nicodemus—Sir (*Bows and retires.*)

Aldw. Welcome, my dear, dear sir, ten thousand welcomes. You need no introduction, from the strong resemblance you bear to your likeness, I should have known you any where.

Nic. That is fortunate. I can proceed to the business at once. I knew if he had once seen my Cousin, he would recognize me—(*aside.*) I am extremely obliged by your kindness, sir—I regret that I should be the ——

Aldw. Make no apology, dear boy, I beg.

Nic. The abruptness of this visit——

Aldw. Not at all.

Nic. My precipitate appearance——

Ald. You do excellently well—make no apologies, pray.

Nic. Can only be excused by the urgency——

Ald. I won't hear another word till you've taken some refreshment.

Nic. The uncertainty of—

Ald. Aye, aye, travelling is damn'd uncertain.

Nic. We are but too liable to be cut short in—

Ald. True, true, I must cut you short now; for supper is just ready—and you must needs want something, travelling so far.

Nic. Nay, my dear sir, but you must prepare yourself for—

Ald. Take no care about that; I have prepared every thing.

Nic. But my dear sir—my late—lamented—

Ald. Better late than never—you're here and that's sufficient. I wish however you hadn't come sooner, certainly—Georgiana is dying with impatience to see you—*I'll call her here, why Georgiana, Georgiana—*is she—

Nic. Zounds, he won't let me edge in a word any way;—*[aside.]*—but my dear sir, allow me a few serious words with you—

Ald. Not another word till you've supp'd—we'll have no serious words together if I know it. To-morrow is time enough for business—to-night we'll devote to mirth and love, you dog—oh, here Georgiana comes.

Nic. What shall I do now—*I can't mention my cousin's death before the young lady; she'd be going into hystericks. I must let the old gentleman have his way, and get him to let me relate the particulars by-and-bye—**[Enter Georgiana.]*—A fine girl, faith.

Georgiana. Did you want me, Papa?

Ald. No, hussey; but Mr. Nicodemus does—Mr. Nicodemus, my daughter Georgiana!

Georgiana. (aside)—What a solemn looking fright, I'm sure I can never bring myself to love him.

Ald. Country bred, Mr. Nicodemus—unformed at present—so much the better, you can mould her to your liking; she's bashful but sincere. Come Georgiana, why don't you say something inspiring to Mr. Nicodemus, hussey, after his long journey.

Georgiana. Something inspiring after a long journey, Pa?—Well then, if I must say something, perhaps I can't say better than—

Ald. Aye, aye, come out with it.

Georgiana. Supper's ready, sir.

Ald. Psha—but egad it's apropos enough; a wag, Mr. Nicodemus—a wag—takes after me.

Nic. I am as much at a loss what to say as the young lady can be; supper's a timely relief, faith—[*aside.*]—allow me to offer my arm, Madam.

Georgiana. You are very polite sir—this way if you please. [*Exeunt Nicodemus and Georgiana.*]

Ald. I'll follow you the moment I have given some orders to the butler. I'm so rejoiced that—

Enter Servant.

Well, sirrah, what do you want?

Serv. I don't want any thing your honor—but here's Dickory—he's come back and wants to see you in private, he says—

Ald. Wants to see me in private!—what can

the blockhead want with me in *private*?—well, let him come in. [Exit Servant.]

I suppose he had idled his time away so, that Mr. Nicodemus was gone before he arrived, and now he's coming with some cock and a bull story to excuse himself.

Enter Dickory (crying.)

Well, what the devil is that cursed long face for?

Dick. Oh, master!—oh, Mr. Aldwinkle, such a misfortune! Oh! Oh!

Ald. What, I suppose when you got to the half-way-house, you found Mr. Nicodemus had just departed?

Dick. Yeas, poor gentleman, he'd been quite gone above an hour afore I got there. I help'd to lay him out when I found how things were.

Ald. Lay him out—Zounds, I hope you didn't speak any thing ill of him.

Dick. Oh no, master, we never do speak ill of those who are gone.

Ald. Gone, well but he's come.

Dick. Come—what—ha' they brought his body here?

Ald. No, he brought his body here himself.

Dick. What, in a hearse?

Ald. No, on a horse, and you must go and wait on him.

Dick. What—sit up all night wi' him!

Ald. No, only till he's finished his supper.

Dick. Supper!—

Ald. Yes, blockhead—he's just sat down with my daughter.

Dick. Dang it, this be the first time I ever heard of dead men sitting down to supper wi' young

ladies—he be quite mad—how his eyes do roll, surely.—*Aside.*]

Ald. Zounds, scoundrel, Dickory, what are you talking about ; though I did give you five shillings to drink, I didn't tell you to make a beast of yourself—he's quite drunk !—go rascal and wait on Mr. Nicodemus, directly.

Dick. He be quite crack'd. (*Aside.*)

Ald. Dreadfully drunk—will you do what I tell you, villain ; will you go in and see that Mr. Nicodemus wants for nothing ; take care that he has plenty of the turtle soup.

Dick. Turtle soup—what be the good of turtle soup when a man be dead. To think now that he should die just when he were going to be married !

Ald. Why, you sottish brazen rascal, you havn't the consummate impudence to pronounce an honest gentleman dead, who is at this moment eating and drinking and making love to my daughter in the very next room ; but your own eyes shall convince you how richly you deserve a ducking ; you say you saw the gentleman.

Dick. Ee's sure ; I were wi' his poor body above an hour and a half.

Ald. Then you'd know him again if you see him.

Dick. Aye, out o' ten thousand.

Ald. Then, see him you shall, and that this very moment ; the sight of him may bring you to your sober senses again. Please just to walk this way sir, that is, if you're able to walk.

Dick. I mun humour the old man, or he may do me a mischief. Poor fellow, how mad he be. (*aside.*) I'm coming, sir. [*Exeunt Ald-winkle and Dickory.*]

SCENE III.

Handsome apartment in Aldwinkle Hall, Nicodemus, Georgiana and Lavinia, discovered sitting at supper.

Nic. [*aside.*] Methinks that I cut but a very foolish figure here; I neither know what to do or say; I believe my best refuge is in silence—Heigho! would I were at home continuing my treatise on Vampires.

Lav. Your Papa does not seem to be coming coz, had we not better proceed to supper?

Geo. Any thing to enliyen us a little. We have been as dull and as silent for the last half hour as a Quaker's meeting. Will you allow me to assist you, sir?

Nic. [*solemnly.*] I thank you, but I have no appetite.

Lav. You feed upon meditation it should seem, sir?

Nic. I must own I am partial to the grave.

Geor. I hope it isn't love that disturbs the gentleman? shall I help you to some cold pudding, sir!

Nic. I never eat cold pudding; but my time is come: I have to set off at day break, and must retire at once—a solemn duty impels me to be absent. Tomorrow night I shall return again, present my regards to your worthy father; an important secret remains to be revealed to him, in which you are all deeply interested. I am too wandering and disturbed for the task now—but to-morrow night! heigho! life is very uncertain. Vale! Vale! [*Exit Nicodemus.*

Lav. Bless me, what an amazingly odd man. I should as soon think of linking myself to the parish pump as such a Don Saltero.

Geor. There is certainly something very mysterious in his manner. Vale! Vale! (*mocking him.*)

Lav. Hush, here's your father.

Enter Aldwinkle and Dickory.

Ald. Now villain, Dickory.—look—convince yourself that——why, the gentleman's gone!

Dick. E'es, to be sure he be—didn't I tell you he were departed, but you wouldn't believe me; his madness be going away—he ha' got a losing interval — *[aside.*

Georgiana. Is it Mr. Nicodemus you want Pa? he has retired to his apartment, and——

Ald. Eh! gone to bed, has he, and without his supper! how is he to find out the room? Run, Dickory, and light him—take him my nightcap and slippers—make haste, rogue.

Georgi. Aye, do Dickory, or the poor gentleman may break his neck over the bannisters.

Dick. They all humor him, I see; well, I mustn't be particular. I'll go sir—*[takes a candle from the table.]*—but if Mr. Nicodemus be there, dang me if I don't first eat him, and then gi' you leave to eat me afterwards.

[Exit Dickory.

Ald. I am sorry Dickory's drunken folly in persisting that Mr. Nicodemus was dead, prevented my paying my respects to him before he retired. Poor fellow, I forgot how far he had travelled to-day!

Enter Dickory, hastily.

Dick. Oh Lord! Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Ald. Eh, why Dickory!—Zounds, block-head what's the matter with you; you look as seared as if you had seen a ghost?

Dick. That be it: you've hit it Squire, by gosh.—It be he! I'll swear to un—I knows un by the turn o' his nose. Oh dear! oh dear! that ever I should ha liv'd to see a ghost.

Ald. See a ghost, dolt!—he's at it again he's breaking out in fresh places—have you seen Mr. Nicodemus, sirrah?

Dick. Na, but I ha' seen his apparition. It be quite indecent and unnatural in un not to rest quiet now he's dead, like a proper Christain gentleman.

Ald. Can the fellow really be serious? I am confounded.

Georgi. A ghost! is the gentleman a ghost? Oh dear, I'm sure I can never bring myself to marry a ghost Pa

Lav. We may profit by this [*aside*] Well, I declare I thought he was something he shouldn't be by his mysterious ways; didn't you remark, coz, that all the time he sat with us, he never opened his mouth till we forced him to it.

Dick. Na, ghosts do never speak but when they be spoken to.

Lav. And then, didn't you remark, Georgy, dear, that he would neither eat nor drink.

Ald. Ghosts never do—I don't know what to think. Stop, Dickory; what's that on the side of the candle?

Dick. Why, a large lump of tallow to be sure what should it be?

Ald. A lump of tallow, dog—it's a winding sheet! I never saw a more perfect one in my life. We'll not go to bed to-night.

Lav. But what we have already told you is not all, sir, he openly confessed he was addicted to the grave.

Ald. Addicted to the grave! my back fairly opens and shuts.

Dic. Depend upon it, he has sum'mat on his mind, I should'nt wonder if he had'nt been privately murdered by somebody, and be come here to get him hung.

Geo. Something on his mind! talking of that just before he vanish'd up stairs, he groan'd out that he had a dreadful secret to disclose to you.

Ald. To me, mercy on me, you put me all in a cold shiver, girl.

Geo. Don't you remember, Lavinia, he said he was obliged to disappear at day-break?

Dic. Disappear at day-break! I warrant him. The moment the cock crows, he mun go bang through the key-hole.

Lav. But he left his compliments, and said he should be sure to come again to-morrow night.

Ald. Hang him, I'll have him laid in the red sea, I'll stop up the key-hole; I'll exorcise him. Oh that I did but understand Latin.

Dic. It would be o' no use, squire, he'd come down the chimney, dress'd all in white. Ah, I knew it warn't for nothing I see'd those three damn'd ravens sitting cawing by the hedge side, to-day. Besides that, this very morning, just as I stepp'd into the cellar, to get a cup of your honor's particular October——

Ald. Ah, when I was looking all over the house after you, and wanted you so——

Dic. Yeas, sir—I heard a loud voice cry Dickory—Dickory—Dick—three times.

Ald. Bless us, and save us, it was'nt my voice, was it, Dickory?

Dic. Na, squire, it were likerer to a trumpet, and just about the time the poor gentleman left off living, our great kitchen jack stopp'd.

Ald. Its past all doubt. Mrs. Veal's ghost itself was'nt more sure. What o'clock was it when Mr. Nic—that is, when the gho——Lord bless me, that is, when *it*, you know who, arrived—

Lar. Exactly midnight sir.

Geo. Just twelve!

Ald. The very hour; they must'nt come out before twelve.

Geo. Oh, dear papa, I never can sleep alone after this. If Mr. Nicodemus comes haunting us at nights in this manner; I really must marry the captain, if its only to take care of me; so you'd better let me have him at once, pa.

Ald. Eh, what noise is that?—Mercy on me, I hope it is'nt——

Dic. He be coming—He be coming, squire!

Ald. Who, Dickory!

Dic. The ghost, sir.

Ald. Let me get out of the way. What's to be done?

Dic. Get behind this screen, and I'll hide under the table. Oh gemini, here he be——

Ald. Oh dear, oh dear, make haste? make haste. I tremble in every joint. [*They all hide.*

Enter Nicodemus.

Nic. I cannot rest.

Ald. (*looking over the screen, aside.*) No, I'll be bound you can't.

Dic. Poor soul. (*aside.*)

Nic. It must be near day-break. I smell the morning air quite fresh—hark—there's a cock crowing. 'Tis time for me to depart.

Ald. (*aside*) Mark that.

Nic. I shall not be at peace till the burial's over, and I have revealed this fatal secret to the family. Hark the cock crows again. I must depart. Paul will be waiting. Heigho. [*Exit Nic.*

They all creep out, watching him off with fear and wonder.

END OF THE FIRST ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Another apartment in Aldwinkle Hall.*

Enter Aldwinkle and Dickory.

Ald. What a state of mind have I been in for the last twenty-four hours : but, having been to the half-way-house, and convinced myself of the truth of your story, I confess I was wrong, when I suspected you of attempting to deceive me ; I was wrong, very wrong.

Dic. E'es, sur, you were.

Ald. But I really thought you had been drinking—you know you do drink sometimes, Dickory.

Dic. E'es, sur, when I be dry.

Ald. However, I must endeavor to make you amends, Dickory, some of these days.

Dic. E'es, sur, you must. Dickens, how my hand do itch—that be a sure sign I shall ha' some money soon ; I shouldn't wonder if your honor wasn't going to give me a guinea.

Ald. Eh, a guinea—hum—there's no guineas now, Dickory, however, you shall have a sovereign, that will do as well.

Dic. E'es, sur, better—I'm a loyal subject, and wish very much for a sovereign

Ald. I'm glad to learn from the landlord, that poor Mr. Nicodemus' relations are going to attend to the funeral themselves ; it will save me a world of trouble, for I couldn't have refused to

put his body under ground. I hope he'll keep there, when he is there, and not pay us any more of his visits

Dic. He'll be sure to come again to-night, squire, y' u know he said he would.

A. d. Lord bless me, so he did.

Dic. He has'nt told you the secret, yet; and he wont rest till that be out depend upon it, none of them can.

Ald. True, true—mercy on me—what is it o'clock now, Dickory.

Dic. Just twelve: the time he came last night.

Ald. Oh my poor wits, they are nearly all frightened away; the unhappy gentleman must have been a terrible wicked reprobate in his time, for his poor soul to be wandering about in this manner, Dickory.

Dic. Yeas, he mun, indeed, but he be paying for it now. Eh, what's that, there he be agairn sur.

Ald. Oh dear, oh dear! Stand back, and let us observe him.

Enter Nicodemus.

Nic. Very odd they should leave all the doors open at this time o'night. I'm glad one melancholy day is over, and that I have gone through so much of the painful duty imposed upon me. Night's the only time I have left to myself now. But where can this Aldwinkle be? I must not any longer delay revealing the important secret to him. I shall not be easy till then, solemnly enjoined to it as I was in the immediate moments of death. He little suspects who I am.

Ald. (aside) Don't be too sure of that.

Nic. But where can he be?

Ald. Now for it.

Nic. (looking round and seeing Aldwinkle) Eh here? this is very odd—Your servant, Mr. Aldwinkle.

Ald. What can I do to give peace to your poor unhappy soul! if you've any thing to unfold, I conjure you to disclose it at once.

Nic. I will—I am not what I seem, nor what you take me to be.

Ald. I know it poor miserable wretch!

Dick. The murder be all coming out now
(*aside.*)

Nic. Though I bear the name of Nicodemus, and exactly resemble him in every particular, I—prepare yourself.

Ald. I am prepared. Lord bless me!

Nic. I—I am merely the representative of that unhappy man—he is no longer in this world.

Ald. I know it Mr. Gho—that is Mr. Representative.

Nic. Unfortunate Gasper—excuse my being overcome; I have had a long journey

Dic. Yeas, it be a good way, I dare say, from the other world. (*aside*)

Nic. I had a pleasant walk through the church yard though

Ald. Oh, no doubt, you found yourself quite at home there.

Nic. Shall I relate to you the particulars of the unhappy event?

Ald. Oh, no; pray dont trouble yourself, Mr. Representative. I am fully acquainted with all.

Nic. I am happy you are. You communicated the melancholy fact to your daughter?

Ald. I did.

Nic. Is she resigned?

Ald. Perfectly.

Nic. 'Tis fortunate; though her destined Bridegroom be no longer in the land of the living, she can still be Mrs. Nicodemus. I offer her my hand.

Ald. Eh—you?

Nic. I shall provide suitable apartments.

Dic. (*aside*) Yeas; on the ground floor, I suppose.

Nic. But we will settle all these things hereafter; I have business to night. I expect a messenger every moment from the sexton and undertaker!

Ald. Lord ha' mercy on us! I would'nt intrude for the world! No doubt another ghost like himself Come along Dickory.

Dic. Wi all my heart. I don't want bidding twice.

[*Exeunt Dickory and Aldwinkle; they conceal themselves on one side of the stage.*]

Nic. That's a very strange old fellow: in fact, they seem a very strange family all together—a little touch'd, I think. Where can Paul be? I desired him to meet me here let it be ever so late—Eh, I am blaming him without cause; he is true to his appointment!

Enter Paul in a mourning cloak, hatband, &c.
I was just wishing for you, Paul.

Paul. I could'nt possibly be here before, sir, to settle every thing, I've flown like lightning, as it is.

Ald (*aside to Dickory*) Who can this terrible-looking figure be all in black.

Dic Depend upon it, squire as Mr Nicodemus be Young Nick, that this be Old Nick.

Nic. (to Paul) Have you settled with the sexton about the grave?

Paul. Make your mind easy, sir; I have got you as nice a grave as you can possibly desire; roomy, dry, and eight feet deep.

Ald. Curse him; I wish he was in it now.
[*aside.*]

Nic. That's comfortable.

Paul. I have brought you a specimen of the cloaks and hatbands. See' ent they quite degagee?—just the thing—Eh.

Nic. They cannot be better.

Paul. You shall have as handsome a funeral as your heart can wish for. The landlord and his two waiters have promised to be mourners over the bier-- the mutés spoke to me last night about attending, and as for the pall-bearers, leave Paul alone for them, so you see there'll be nothing wanting.

Nic. Will the bells toll before and after as I wished them.

Paul. Your own ears shall convince you that they have not been forgotten.

Nic. Good.

Paul. I have settled for the funeral to take place to-morrow; you'll be quite ready then.

Nic. Yes, I shall keep myself on purpose.

Paul. It can be put off if you wish it.

Nic. By no means! the sooner the better. When once the burial has take place, I shall be at rest; I shan't have a quiet night till then.

Paul. You will of course move the first in the procession; it couldn't take place without you and you'll like a ride.

Ald. [*as. de.*] The devil take such rides, say I,

Nic. But, the epitaph---you've forgotten the epitaph.

Paul. No, I havn't ; i've written one for you myself--but you shall hear. [*reads.*]

“ Here, taken one day by surprize,
 “ Mister Nicodemus lies ;
 “ Had he a little longer tarried,
 “ To Miss Aldwinkle he'd been married ;
 “ But Death, to spare a late repentance,
 “ Cried, ‘ Come, Nick, come,’ so strait he
 “ went hence,
 “ And now awaits his final sentence ”

There, how d ye like it-- you must admire the final sentence if you don't any other part of it.

Nic. The matter is better than the manner, but it will do, let me have it neatly engraved.

Paul. Set your mind at ease, it shall be done by one of the first lapidaries we have.

Nic. But you must need refreshment. Come this way, and I will get you a bone to pick. I will now go and continue my researches in the Domestic History of Vampires, that I may be completely au fait to my task, and not prove myself a novice, and by the time I've married old Aldwinkle's daughter, I shall be able to put my theory in practice. Come Paul, come.

[*Exeunt Paul and Nicodemus. Aldwinkle and Dickory come forward.*]

Dic. Dang me, if this bain't the first time I ever heard of a dead man being asked when he liked to be buried.

Ald. I am perfectly perforated in every part with horror---going to marry my daughter and turn Vampire---Ah ! no doubt to practise on her. But, thank Heaven, he'll be buried to-

morrow. Dickory, go you the first thing to-morrow and see him box d up, and d'ye hear, bribe the sexton to dig his grave a foot or two deeper, and put one of the heaviest and largest stones he can get upon it.

Dic. I will, sir ; any thing to keep him down and prevent his coming up.

Ald. And in the mean time we'll go and hide ourselves till daybreak in the cellar. When ghosts are abroad, the only safe place is under ground.

Dic. You be right, Squire ---and if he do dare to come there dang me if we don't lay un in the Red Sea o' one o' your pipes o' Port.

[*Exeunt Aldwinkle and Dickory*]

SCENE II---*Another apartment in Aldwinkle Hall,*

Enter Georgiana, Lavinia, and Vauntington.

Lav. Why, my dear Georgiana, if I could be weak enough to bend my mind to superstition, I must own there are corroborative circumstances enough to prove the poor gentleman a ghost even to the sceptical. But the reign of the invisible world has passed away with the ages of chivalry and ignorance ; the establishment of Sunday Schools. my dear, has signed the death warrant of all ghosts past, present and to come, so you must excuse me if I remain incredulous.

Geo. I am convinc'd Mr. Nicodemus is a ghost a veritable ghost and nothing but a ghost.

Vaunt. A ghost my rival—then Othello's occupation's gone. To run him through will only be thrusting at the air—with such an ap-

tagonist as him, the best way, I think, will be to cut and run.

Enter Nicodemus, unperceived by Georgiana, &c.

Nic. Eh! engaged in secret conversation—
I'll not break in upon their privacy.—[*Aside*]

Vaunt. If we can but once get this Mr. Nicodemus under ground, we'll manage to keep him there, if we heap a mountain upon him. I'll teach him how to rival me, a marrowless rascal.

Nic. What's that, they are saying about burying me under a mountain. I must hear farther.—
[*Aside.*]

Geo. If he does force me to marry him, you must come at night captain and knock him on the head.

Vaunt Aye, fumigate him.

Nic. Knock me on the head, and fumigate me! here's atrocity —[*Aside*]

Geo. Or get him between two feather beds and smother him.

Nic. Here's a she devil.—What an escape!
[*Aside.*]

Geo. Any thing to get rid of the monster.

Nic. A very affectionate wife, upon my honor.

Vaunt. I'm getting strangely valiant, I only wish I could face this wandering gentleman now—I'd teach him how to rest at night—
—Damme I'd—

Nicodemus (*coming forward.*)

Geo. Ah! (*Screams*) (*Rushes out.*)

Vaunt. Oh! the devil.—Take care.

[*Exit hastily.*]

Lav. Shall I follow their example—No, why should I—I never was afraid of a man yet, and I'm sure I won't be of the ghost of one.—(*aside.*) “Angels and Ministers of Grace defend me!—Art thou a spirit of health, or——.”

Nic. I fear I have alarmed you, madam.—'Twas unintentionally, I trust my interruption is not *material*?

Lav. No Sir. 'Tis *imniteria*'—if I'm to believe what I'm told—do you bring any news from the other world pray?

Nic. The other world! She means the new world, I suppose--(*Aside.*) I know of no others news madam, than that the glorious cause of liberty is making rapid way there.

Lav. Hum; that accounts for his being at liberty here--(*aside.*)

Nic. If I may trust the promise of those eyes, you own a nature kinder than your cousin. Were my fate linked to thine, methinks you would not nurse that fierce exterminating spirit to which I was unwillingly and invisibly obliged to bear witness ere while in Miss Aldwinkle.

Lav. I certainly should not wish to disturb your existence so long as you remained harmless.

Nic. My researches among beings of another world, necessarily keep me secluded from this, during the day; but at night, I invariably revisit and mingle with society. Could I meet with a congenial spirit in wedlock, who would take a part in my supernatural studies, it might wonderfully change my nature and habits.

Such a spirit I would fain hope I have found in you, lovely girl - (*kisses her hand.*)

Lav. A very gallant ghost, upon my honor.

Nic. But I must tear myself away, or I shall be too late for the funeral.

Lav. Bless me here's a sudden change—this is from gay to grave with a witness to it.

Nic. Farewell, I regret I am obliged to leave you—a fatal necessity.—Heigho, farewell.

[*Exit* Nicodemus.

Lav. Very extraordinary. If he is a ghost, I don't see any difference between ghosts and men, for my part. He looks like a man, and i'faith, kisses like one too. Really if he should make me an offer, I don't know what I should say to it. I suppose, he won't insist upon my being a ghostess. —No, no, if he marries me he'll like me to be a woman—and i'faith a woman he shall find me.—

[*Exit* Lavinia.

SCENE III.—*Refectory of Aldwinkle Hall.*

Enter Vauntington and Aldwinkle.

Ald. I have said it captain. If your valour gives you stoutness of stomach sufficient to enable you to sit up in the haunted room all night to-night—that is in my bed-room, and lay this ghost if he should come, you have my full permission to marry my daughter

Vaunt. It's a bargain Squire; for my dear Georgiana's sake, damme, I've spirit enough in me to face ten thousand ghosts.

Ald. You shall have a bottle of brandy, a pair of pistols, Friar Bacon, and Doctor Faustus, so you can't fail,

Vaunt. I only want a good heart, sir, and that I've got already.

Ald. I can tell you one thing in your favor. He was to be buried to-day, so I don't think he'll trouble us any more—I've sent Dickory to see, and expect him back every moment; but away with you to your post—it's past eleven already, and you mus'nt let the ghost come and catch you unprepared.

Vaunt. Never fear squire. Omnia vincit amor.

[*Exit Vauntington.*]

Dickory (Without) Tol de dol, de dol lol.

Ald. That's Dickory's voice.

Enter Dickory, (dancing and singing.)

Well, Dickory?

Dic. It be all over Squire.—He be earth'd down, safe enough now, sur. I did'nt come away till I'd seen sexton fill up every crack there were----he'll be cunning to get out this time.

Ald. Bravo, egad, I'm so rejoic'd that—Tell Thomas to bring in the great bowl of punch I ordered him to get ready: and d'ye hear, bid him put a pint of brandy additional into it. We shall be sure to lack spirits now we've got rid of the ghosts.—Fore Heav'n we'll have a night on't Dickory.

Dic. Here be Thomas, Squire, and the punch too.----Tol de dol, de dol lol.

Enter Servant with punch.

Ald. Put it down Thomas; put it down.

[*Servant puts down the punch and retires.*]
Now Dickory, fill up your glass—(*fills*) and our first toast shall be peace to Mr. Nicodemus's manes ——(*drinks.*)

Dic. Wi' all my heart---Here be peace to Mr. Nicodemus's remainders-- (*drinks.*)

ld. Fill up again Dickory.--- [*Fills.*]---And now, I'll give you -- [*Enter Nicodemus behind*] confusion to all midnight intruders

Nic. (*unobserved.*) Zounds, do they mean to insult me?

Dic. [*filling*] Confusion to all midnight excluders.--- [*drinks.*]

Ald. Come, here's wishing the surgeons mayn't get hold of him--- [*going to fill.*]

Nic. [*coming between them.*] Sir!

[*Both run off hastily.*]

Nic. Zounds, one would think I was a spectre, wherever I go I frighten every body away. Surely it can't be this suit of black---no matter, the melancholy ceremony over. I have now time to return to the soft duties of love and my grand work on Vampires. I am somewhat fatigued by my days exertions, and shall retire at once to my room, without disturbing the family. Thanks to Paul's assistance, every thing went off admirably well. My poor cousin must have been uncommonly gratified in being buried so tastefully and comfortably.---Heigho!

[*Exit Nicodemus.*]

SCENE IV.---*Bed Room in Aldwinkle Hall.*

Fire place, tables, chairs, &c. VAUNTINGTON discovered sitting at a table. Brandy, pistols, candles, books, &c. before him.

Vaunt. [*looking at his watch*] 'Tis very near twelve---I don't half like this job. I must take a little more brandy.--- [*drinks.*]---It would be no use firing at him, he'd no more mind having

the contents of a pistol in his body than if they were only so many force meat balls; I must take another bumper.—[*drinks.*—] is the only thing I have to support me—what an awful silence—I wish I could break it somehow—I'll sing—Tol lol de—No, I'm in no humor for singing, suppose I try and whistle, *pho, pher, pher*—[*Whistles.*]—Damn it, whistling's ominous—and besides, and besides, my throat's so dry that—I must take a little more brandy.—[*drinks.*]—I can't be wrong---it's a *spiritual* service, and more fit for the chaplain of our regiment than me. I've a great mind to sound a retreat--but then, Georgiana and her fortune---I'll take another glass of brandy---[*drinks*]---then ---yaw aw ! I feel growing amazingly sleepy, so --I'll just finish the bottle---[*drinks*]---and--yaw aw !---defy the devil and——yaw aw !- , [sleeps.]

Enter Nicodemus

Nic. A stranger in my room ! and-- Eh, pistols ! and---what's here ?---a bottle - Brandy---a Vulgate ---Poor gentleman, he has mistaken the way ; I'd better wake him and set him right -- Sir ! sir !—[*tries to wake Vauntington*]—Zounds, how fast he is. Ulloa ! what's your name ?—Mister, i'll bawl no more—what shall I do ?—I have it—I'll try if the report of one of these pistols will wake him.

[Fires one of the pistols— VAUNTINGTON starts up in terror—sees NICODEMUS.]

Vaunt. The ghost himself, by all that's damnable. [Exit hastily.]

Nic. Stop sir—Mister—Ulloa---he's off---very odd---what did he mean by a ghost ? I must seek Mr. Aldwinkle and obtain an explanation

of these mysteries. Oh, that they would let me have a little rest---Heigho? [*Exit Nicodemus.*]

SCENE V.---*Another apartment in Aldwinkle Hall.*

Enter Aldwinkle and Dickory.

Ald. Dickory! Dickory. they're at it ding dong; I heard the pistols go off just this moment.

Dic. Hey, dang it, here he be again!

Ald. Who? the ghost!

Dic. Na, only the Captain.

Enter Vauntington.

Ald. Well, my dear boy, how have you got on?

Enter Georgiana and Lavinia.

Geo. Ah! how have you got on, I'm dying to know?

Vaunt. What the deuce shall I say? If I confess my defeat, I lose my Georgiana. I must brazen it out,---[*aside.*]---Oh! I've had desperate work we've been at it tooth and nail for the last half hour, but I think the business is settled now. Firing was of no use, one might as well have shot at the air for all the wounds it created, so I had at him with the Latin, Frior Bacon, Doctor Faustus. and Agrippa.

Dic. Ay, he be a gripper, indeed.

Ald. That's right, I could have laid him myself, if I had but understood Latin.

Vaunt. I fumigated him, and exercised him.

Dic. Dang me, but I should ha' liked to ha seen un done his exercise.

Ald. Be quiet, Dickory, scoundrel!

Vaunt. And at length I pressed him so hard, that he took himself off through the key-hole in a clap of thunder, and I dare say will never shew his face here again,

Dic. Na, not till the next time.

Ald. My dear dear boy, you shall marry Georgianna directly, I suppose the foolish phantom thought he had children to deal with.

Enter Nicodemus

Nic. Mr. Aldwinkle, what is the reason sir-----

(The women scream---all exit hastily in great terror.)

Nic. This is more and more extraordinary. Surely I must have been metamorphosed unknown to myself; transmogrified into some monster, or-- But I have more important things to occupy my mind. [*Aldwinkle, Lavinia, &c. appear listening.*] The great and conclusive truth at which I have arrived in my grand work, renders my mind sufficiently disengaged to think of love. There is no doubt that Vampires seek an union with mortal beings expressly to prolong their existence on this earth. I shall instantly therefore seek the fair Aldwinkle, and achieve our marriage. After what I have endured, meanwhile, a walk in the moonlight will revive me [*Exit Nicodemus.*]

Enter Aldwinkle, Georgianna, Lavinia, Vauntingon, and Dic'ory creeping in.

Lav. There sir, you hear what he said, he is a Vampire, and merely seeks an union with my cousin to prolong his existence,

Geo Oh, I'm sure I'll never marry a Vampire, pa; he'd eat me up if I did,

Dic. Ah, kill you wi' kindness.

Lan. You see he's gone into the garden to bring himself to life again in the moon-beams, from the wounds of the captain.

Vant. Why I did kill him half a dozen times, certainly.

Dic. Dang it, I did'nt know the moon were a doctor afore--they be all mad (*aside.*)

Ald. What a persecuted old man I am--What's to be done, how can we get rid of him?

Lav. Listen to me, sir--Guarrantee that the Captain shall have my cousin, and settle a small fortune on me, and I undertake to keep Mr. Nicodemus from ever troubling you at night again; I'll make him rest, I'll warrant him.

Ald. Do that, and I'll make your fortune equal to my daughter's.

Lav. I pledge my life on the result; join me a few minutes hence in the garden, and let the performance of your promise follow that of mine.

[*Exit Lavinia.*

Ald. An odd wench, i'faith--I should not at all wonder if the jade was to keep her word. Let us walk slowly on, for I long to ascertain the truth.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE THE LAST.

Gardens of Aldwinkle Hall, by Moonlight, NICODEMUS, solus.

Nic. Can it be possible, that the moon beaming such cool pure lustre can entrance men's minds to madness—She bathes me in her filmy light like dew, refreshing and allaying—melting

me into softness, and attuning each stern chord of heart to love and harmony—Heigho!

Enter Lavinia.

By heavens, responsive to my feelings comes this angelic girl, to captivate and charm.

Lav. My good sir, if you have no particular wish to be knock'd o'the head for an evil spirit, you will give over these nightly wanderings; hit upon some decisive method of proving yourself an ipso facto man, and rest quietly in your bed at night

Nic. How admirably she will assist me in my learned labors.

Lav. I fear I am more likely to disturb his learned labors, than to assist him in them.

Nic. An evil spirit---nightly wanderings---knock me o'the head A light begins to break in upon me—how better can I prove myself a man, sweet girl, than by uniting my life's fate with thine.

Lav. Marry me!---that will be one way certainly.

Nic. Thus on my knees--(*kneels.*)

Enter Aldwinkle, Georgiana, Vauntington and Dickory.

Ald. He's laid at last—see he's on his knees begging for mercy.

Lav. Rise, sir, I know all you are going to say—and as I've no very particular objection, there's my hand.

Nic. Upon my word—a very sensible girl—she saves one a world of trouble.

Lav. And now, sir, (*to Ald.*) I claim the performance of your promise. To rid your house of

the nightly visits of this terrible being, and to make him rest quietly, as other Christians do, I have heroically resolved to sacrifice myself, and marry him.

Ald. What, marry a ghost—a vampire—a spirit?

Nic. I see it, all, here has been a grand mistake; you have confounded me with my cousin.

Ald. Egad, it seems we've all been couzened and confounded too—however, I'm heartily glad things have turned out as they have; but you, Dickory, how came you to take it into your head this gentleman was a ghost?

Doc. Why, sir, if he warnt a ghost, he was a spirit: and spirits very often get into my head.

Lov. I will explain every thing, and rid you of all further cause of fear: this gentleman will like me none the worse for having a fortune—My cousin will like him none the worse for having been the means of uniting her to the captain; and, if our Friends permit our harmless ghost to wait a few nights longer for their amusement, we shall like them none the worse; but receive a zest to act with additional spirit for the future.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.